

#### Members

Rep. John Aguilera, Chairperson  
Rep. Rich McClain  
Sen. Thomas Wyss, Vice-Chairperson  
Sen. Vi Simpson  
Remo Mezzetta  
Dr. Mary Ilu Altman  
Juana Orellan Watson  
Manuel Gonzales  
Salvador Soto  
Ronnie Cantu  
Mara Candelaria Reardon  
Myrna Maldonado  
Rudy Lopez  
Evelyn Ridley-Turner  
Carmen Quintana  
Sandra D. Leek  
John Hamilton  
Claudia Ontiveros  
Carmen Natal



## LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS

*Legislative Services Agency*  
200 West Washington Street, Suite 301  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2789  
Tel: (317) 233-0696 Fax: (317) 232-2554

#### LSA Staff:

Valerie Ruda, Fiscal Analyst for the Committee  
Susan Montgomery, Attorney for the Committee

Authority: IC-2-5-27

### MEETING MINUTES<sup>1</sup>

Meeting Date: September 26, 2002  
Meeting Time: 10:30 A.M.  
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St., 130  
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana  
Meeting Number: 2

**Members Present:** Rep. John Aguilera, Chairperson; Sen. Thomas Wyss, Vice-Chairperson; Sen. Vi Simpson (by Betty Stapert); Remo Mezzetta; Dr. Mary Ilu Altman; Juana Orellan Watson; Manuel Gonzales; Ronnie Cantu; Mara Candelaria Reardon; Myrna Maldonado; Evelyn Ridley-Turner; Carmen Quintana (by Zach Cattell); Sandra D. Leek (by Elvira Vazquez-Carroll); Claudia Ontiveros; Carmen Natal.

**Members Absent:** Rep. Rich McClain; Salvador Soto; Rudy Lopez; John Hamilton.

Chairperson John Aguilera called the second meeting of the Legislative Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs to order at 10:40 a.m. Rep. Aguilera told the Commission that they should consider possible bill draft language for Findings and vote by October 31<sup>st</sup>. Susan Montgomery, Attorney for the Commission, explained the procedure for a Commission to vote on Findings. Senator Wyss stated that though the Commission does not meet beyond November 1<sup>st</sup>, legislators may introduce bills after that point.

Rep. Aguilera noted that he is still asking for reconsideration of meeting year round, and that the next meeting will be October 10<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. The members introduced themselves.

#### 1. Topics for Future Study by the Commission

Rep. Aguilera asked if any members had any issues to add to the list of topics (Exhibit A). Mr.

---

<sup>1</sup> Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

Gonzales added a topic concerning the acquisition of state-owned surplus real estate for use by Hispanic organizations as issue number 15. Senator Wyss asked Ms. Watson to write a letter to the Chief Justice concerning loan qualifications and banking systems in Latino communities.

Rep. Aguilera listed the following categories of interest of the topics as:

1. Health
2. Education
3. Criminal Justice
4. Economic Development/Community Development
5. Civil Rights
6. Other

Topic 1. Ms. Watson raised this issue for clarity as to who may buy a house, the need to understand more about loans, and tax identification numbers. Mr. Gonzales felt that there is a lack of understanding of the laws, there is a need to create public awareness as to the lending process, and that credit risk is an issue. Commissioner Ridley-Turner asked that this information be provided to the Commission. Senator Wyss suggested that it sounded like an issue for the Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General's office. Jeffery R. Cox, representing the Attorney General's office, said that he would take this issue back to the Attorney General. This topic was placed in the economic development category.

Topic 2. In the absence of Mr. Soto who proposed the topic, Rep. Aguilera asked if any of the members could speak on the issues of emergency topics versus empowerment topics, and prioritization. Ms. Watson suggested that Mr. Soto did not want to mix the issues between emergency and empowerment topics.

Topic 3. Dr. Altman described the federal Dream Act which enables a child of undocumented parents to go to a state college and pay in-state tuition. United States Senator Lugar advocates this legislation. Category: education.

Topic 4. Ms. Reardon regarded Director Leek's topic, Criminal Justice System, to be that of certification of interpreters. Category: criminal justice.

Following discussion by the members, Rep. Aguilera took a vote by consent to combine the criminal justice and civil rights categories. Civil rights was placed in the criminal justice category. Elvira Vazquez Carroll, representing Director Leek, suggested they should remain separate because of differing issues, such as legal issues, but then agreed they could go together for the purpose of prioritizing the list of issues.

Topic 5. The Commission decided that best practices should be considered in all the categories.

Topic 6. Mr. Mezzetta spoke on employment opportunities for the increasing number of Latino workers in Indiana. Three billion dollars worth of work is located in the Indianapolis area; there is a need to get Latinos in the workplace. They are not given the same rights as other legal workers. Ms. Reardon asked if the Indiana Plan (regarding job training) has been successfully implemented in his area. Mr. Mezzetta said he is familiar with the Hoosier Plan (for Hispanic worker training), but not the Indiana Plan, and expressed interest in learning more about the Indiana Plan. Mr. Mezzetta also spoke on the legal process by which Latinos become legitimate workers. In response, Dr. Altman suggested that an immigration category be created for issues related to Latinos becoming legal residents. Category: economic development.

After discussion, the category of immigration was added to the list.

Topic 7. Ms. Natal spoke on the Governmental Task Force on Migrant Affairs. The task force is no longer associated with the executive branch, but still meets on its own. Her supervisor, Darlene Slaby, Director of Language Minority and Migrant Programs of the Department of Education, chairs the task force; they send out minutes of every meeting. Senator Wyss expressed his interest in having Ms. Slaby testify in the future.

The Commission quickly discussed the following topics and categorized them as:

Topic 8. Court services, Interpreters; Category: criminal justice.

Topic 9. Leadership in Indiana; Category: economic development.

Topic 10. Business development in the Hispanic community; Category: economic development.

Topic 11. Earned income tax credit; Category: economic development.

Topic 12. Home ownership; Category: economic development.

Topic 13. Health care access; Category: health care.

Topic 14. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); Category: economic development.

Topic 15. Acquisition of state land; Category: economic development.

Dr. Altman requested that a topic be added regarding how the state is preparing our teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century to teach an increasing number of students learning English as a second language. This topic was added to the list as number 16; category: education.

After Rep. Aguilera categorized the issues, he determined that the economic development category contained the most issues.

Mr. Gonzales proposed that the Commission look into the state's procurement of funds for Hispanic/Latino businesses. This action could provide very helpful information given the limited number of meetings this year. The state does not measure how much money goes to Hispanic minority businesses. He proposed that the Commission provide a report focusing on three main parts: identifying the state's procurement policies, suggestions to help rectify the problem, and recommendations from the Commission to the state. Senator Wyss suggested with Rep. Aguilera's concurrence, to have the Department of Administration present its policies, among those of other state's agencies, to see if legislation or a rule is needed for this issue. Input would be sought from the agencies with specific questions.

Dr. Altman asked if she could propose to be considered on the education agenda that the state engage in a partnership with the Mexican government to educate its nationals on how to read and write, a program entitled Plaza Comunitaria. Ms. Natal agreed with Dr. Altman and suggested the state also needs to focus on educating children to prepare to enter the workforce. Ms. Watson expressed the need to teach Spanish before English. Member Natal responded by suggesting both be taught simultaneously. Dr. Altman stated that the human resources to do this are limited, and proposed that Linda Warner from the Department of Education, Adult Education, come to speak on the lack of resources and need for compromise on the issue. Rep. Aguilera moved that the Commission could take on the two issues of education and economic development. Mr. Gonzales seconded, and the Commission concurred by voice vote.

Rep. Aguilera requested that Dr. Altman and Mr. Gonzales bring attendees to the next meeting to testify. Rep. Aguilera stated that by choosing these two issues, it does not mean the other topics will not be addressed in the future, and he invited the members to meet informally if they so choose to discuss any of the other topics.

## 2. Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV)

Senator Wyss stated that Marilyn Cage, Legislative Liaison from the BMV, would be speaking on the documentation required for licenses and identification cards that it had released since the last meeting. Two handouts were provided (Exhibits B and C) detailing the BMV's policy changes. Ms. Cage stated that the new requirements go into effect on September 30<sup>th</sup>. She added that she would like to hear the discussion regarding the changes of the documentation requirement and then respond to questions.

Ms. Cage clarified the renewal requirements, specifically regarding the social security number, at Dr. Altman's request. Mr. Gonzales asked if the Federal Identification Number (as listed at the end of Category C of Exhibit C) is the same as a taxpayer ID number and if so, could the Federal ID number become a primary document? Rep. Aguilera asked if any other states accept this piece of documentation. Ms. Cage did not know and agreed to take the previous two questions to the BMV Commissioner who could provide an answer. Ms. Watson noted a public safety issue as operators drive without licenses or insurance and asked how this might be fixed. Ms. Cage replied that the BMV considers individual cases to see what documentation each person has to offer. Rep. Aguilera asked if the state could consider issuing a permit to drivers, who do not have all the required documents for a driver's license, at least temporarily to take care of some of the documentation issues. Ms. Cage believed the BMV would need most of the same documentation due to security concerns.

Ms. Natal asked how to tell what immigration documents are valid. Ms. Cage responded that their personnel are trained to look for forged or tampered documents. Ms. Cage also reminded the members that the BMV is still learning in this process and is trying to figure out where the weaknesses are.

Ms. Watson suggested the BMV work with economic development councils to encourage people to get licenses. Mr. Cantu proposed a permit that would allow driving, although not to be used as a form of identification. Mr. Mezzetta asked if the BMV has investigated what states closer to the Mexican border are doing with this issue. Ms. Cage replied that the Commissioner has looked into other states' policies. Senator Wyss, aware of the Indiana Counter-Terrorism Council, informed the members that all of the states' commissioners have met to discuss this issue.

Rep. Aguilera opened the floor to the public. Bob Barber spoke in support of the BMV's policies concerning documentation (Exhibit D). He expressed his concern that the Commission continue to help ensure that people are who they say they are when applying for identification, and stated he did not know of any other states that have weakened their policies related to this issue.

Victor Zamudio, a professor from Mexico now living in Indiana, believes human rights issues, integration, and assimilation are crucial. He asked the Commission how Hispanic/Latinos can be made part of our community. Yesinia Gonzales spoke of the need for interpreters at BMV branches and asked if BMV will hire interpreters. Rep. Aguilera asked Ms. Gonzales if she had taken her question to the BMV. She said she had not done so.

### 3. Future Meetings

Rep. Aguilera asked that the BMV be put on the next meeting's agenda to provide an opportunity for some of today's questions to be answered.

Dr. Altman spoke in regards to Mr. Barber's testimony. She commended him for reminding the members that the United States is a democracy and the issues he spoke of are national as well as state policy issues. Senator Wyss believed the Commission's primary responsibility should be giving every resident the full possibility of becoming productive citizens, although the state's

responsibility first goes to the residents who are here legally. Dr. Altman requested that Mary Jane Gonzales from the Indiana Hispanic Chamber of Commerce attend the last meeting on October, 31<sup>st</sup>.

Dr. Altman, Margie Chavez, and Mary Jane Gonzales spoke of their experiences at the recent National Hispanic Leadership Summit in mid September; all found it to be informative and empowering. Dr. Altman enjoyed the opportunity to learn what is happening at the federal level.

There being no further business before the Commission, Rep. Aguilera adjourned the meeting at 1:05 p.m.